

Heritage Citation



Manly-Lota Presbyterian Church

Key details

Also known as	Rix-Farmer Memorial Church
Addresses	At 137 Oceana Terrace, Lota, Queensland 4179
Type of place	Church, Hall
Period	Interwar 1919-1939
Style	Carpenter Gothic
Lot plan	L3_RP33169; L2_RP33169; L4_RP33169; L1_RP33169
Key dates	Local Heritage Place Since — 1 January 2004 Date of Citation — March 2008

Construction	Roof: Corrugated iron; Walls: Timber
People/associations	George Trotter - Church (Architect)
Criterion for listing	(A) Historical; (D) Representative; (G) Social; (H) Historical association

The Manly-Lota Presbyterian Church, originally named the Rix-Farmer Memorial Church, was constructed in 1931 to the design of Brisbane architect George Trotter. The original hall next to the church was destroyed by fire in 1932 and the new church hall was constructed by 1934. Memorial trees were later added to the site. The church and hall are still in use by the local Presbyterian community.

History

Presbyterian services in the Manly-Lota area date back to the late c19th with the first Church opening in Chestnut Street in c1895. However by c1918 the Congregation had acquired the present site with a small dwelling upon it. The acquisition of this property was the result of a donation from Mrs Rix. The Rix family owned land that bordered the Lota Estate.

The Church utilised the dwelling on site and by the 1920s the congregation was faced with the choice of adapting the dwelling for expanded Sunday School attendance or construct a new Church. While there was a reluctance to go into debt to build the new Church eventually it was decided to construct the present Church. Much of the funding was provided by a £300/-/- legacy from Mrs H.E.Farmer.

Brisbane architect George Trotter was engaged to design the Church. Trotter, who among other things ran an "extensive" domestic practice, was a member of the Annerley congregation and had also designed St John's Presbyterian Church in King Street, Annerley. Trotter was asked to model this church on the Cannon Hill Presbyterian Church.

The Church was constructed by Mr Bodyer and was completed and opened with great ceremony on 24 October 1931. Total cost of the Church and furnishings was around £621/-/- (including seating) of which £200/-/- had been loaned, free of interest, by the Presbytery's Church Extension Committee. This, money together with the donations, left only £18/-/- debt remaining before opening. This is quite an achievement when one considers the Church was completed during the depression era and represents the dedication of the congregation to this project and to their faith.

The construction of the Church was an event to the extent that the 17 October 1931 edition of the *Daily Mail* noted:

The church is to be opened at 3.15p.m on Saturday, October 24th, by Miss A.L.Young. The dedication service will be conducted by Rev. R.Miller, assisted by three of the leading Presbyterian Ministers of Queensland.

The dwelling was left on the site, and utilised as a hall. However in c1932 it burnt down, the cause of the fire was attributed to an electrical fault. A new hall was constructed and occupied by c1934. This hall has undergone a number of necessary and practical alterations to meet the needs of its users. These include extensions to the rear, at one time, construction of a stage inside (since removed), new porches to the front and rear, lining of the interior and construction of kitchen and nursery rooms.

As a place of religious worship and fellowship the church and its facilities, which include its park setting amongst the memorial trees, has provided a place for practicing the Protestant Faith in the Manly-Lota area for a since c1918. Currently the Church is still an important place of religious worship and affords its facilities to a number of community groups.

Description

This place comprises of two slightly raised single-story inter-connected timber buildings, one a church and the other a hall. In addition planted throughout the grounds are significant memorial trees. (Please refer to appendix A for location, tree type, and naming dedication). While there is a car track down northern side of the church allowing for small volume off street parking, the main pedestrian entry to the church is via Oceania Tce. Entry stairs are provided at the front and rear of the church. The hall in comparison to the Church is set back allowing the Church to dominate the site from the front perspective.

Understandably the Church as the main building is more elaborate in design and larger in size. Reflecting the austere nature of Protestantism, and remaining reasonably intact the Church has minimal external and internal decoration. The Church is clad in chamfer board with high, but narrow, half round arched window over casement windows. 5 of these windows align both the north and south walls of the Church. The casement windows provide for lighting and ventilation and an important subtle decorative feature to the structure.

The front of the Church is symmetrical in design with a covered entry mimicking the main roof pitch and half-timbered gable pattern. The entry is flanked either side by half round arched window over sash windows. The entry has three small windows and entry is via small stairs on the southern side. The centre window of the entry is of 4 small panes and is flanked either side by 3 small paneled windows. The roof has a small curve upward on the eaves and has a roof of fibrolite slate.

The interior of the Church differs very little from when it was constructed and maintains many of its fixtures and fittings from this time. The Church is lined being dressed pine to dado height. The pulpit is of silky oak as is the communion rail. The pews are original to the Church and form an important part of the internal significance of the church. The interior reflects the Protestant beliefs and is plain and unadorned with religious icons.

The hall is of slightly smaller dimensions and the street presentation broadly mimics that of the Church. Visually the combination of the hall being set back from the road, in comparison to the Church, in conjunction with the undulating land, both of the allotment and from the street, presents the hall as an elevated structure. Apart from the entry connection with the Church, which has external stairs leading from it, the hall has a front stair entry leading from a small covered entry. The front is of symmetrical appearance with casement windows either side of the entry.

Side windows are of casement type. The roofline of the hall is straight to the edges. Roof is of corrugated

galvanised iron. Timber battens have been used to enclose the underfloor area. Internally the hall is lined with no ceiling and the beams are exposed. The area between the beams is lined along the roofline. While mimicking the church in style this provides for a greater open expanse and allows for cooling breezes to circulate within the hall. The hall has a large community space for meetings and events with smaller rooms to house facilities and for storage.

Statement of significance

Relevant assessment criteria

This is a place of local heritage significance and meets one or more of the local heritage criteria under the Heritage planning scheme policy of the *Brisbane City Plan 2014*. It is significant because:

Historical

CRITERION A

The place is important in demonstrating the evolution or pattern of the city's or local area's history as a Presbyterian church and hall constructed during the interwar era.

Representative

CRITERION D

The place is important in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a particular class or classes of cultural places

as a purpose-built interwar Presbyterian church and hall that has retained its original purpose since the 1930s.

Social

CRITERION G

The place has a strong or special association with the life or work of a particular community or cultural group for social, cultural or spiritual reasons

as a Presbyterian church and hall that have provided a venue for church services, religious instruction and social activities for the local faith community since the 1930s.

Historical association

CRITERION H

The place has a special association with the life or work of a particular person, group or organization of importance in the city's or local area's history

as an example of the ecclesiastical architecture of Brisbane architect George Trotter.

References

1. Brisbane City Council CPHR file notes
 2. Certificates of Title.
 3. Donald Watson and Judith McKay, *Queensland Architects of the Nineteenth Century*, South Brisbane: Queensland Museum, 1994
 4. Manly-Lota Presbyterian Church 50th Anniversary 1931 - 1981
 5. *The Presbyterian Outlook*. 1 December, 1931
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Note: This citation has been prepared on the basis of evidence available at the time including an external examination of the building. The statement of significance is a summary of the most culturally important aspects of the property based on the available evidence, and may be re-assessed if further information becomes available. The purpose of this citation is to provide an informed evaluation for heritage registration and information. This does not negate the necessity for a thorough conservation study by a qualified practitioner, before any action is taken which may affect its heritage significance.

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